

White House Denies Reports on K.G.B. Defector

By PHILIP SHENON

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 27 — The White House today denied reports that a K.G.B. officer had fled to the West last year and was now living in the United States. Meanwhile, Congressional sources confirmed the reports of an officer's defection.

At a news conference, Larry Speakes, the White House spokesman, said that the "whole story" about the defection was "not correct." Asked what aspect of the story was inaccurate, he responded, "The whole thing."

In interviews over the weekend, Congressional sources said that a Soviet in-

telligence officer defected last year and was residing in the United States under an assumed name. One source said that the defector had escaped from East Germany.

Accounts Called 'Baseless'

It is unclear why the White House and Congressional accounts differ, although one source on Capitol Hill speculated that the Reagan Administration might attempt to deny the existence of the defector to protect him from publicity.

After Mr. Speakes's statement, a senior White House official said in an interview that the news accounts of the

defection were "baseless." But the official would not comment when asked if the purported K.G.B. officer might have been confused with a ranking officer of another Soviet intelligence agency. "We just wouldn't have any further comment," the official said.

Administration and Congressional figures acknowledge that the recent defections of several Soviet bloc officials have never been disclosed publicly.

The newly reported defection was first disclosed by U.S. News & World Report, and then by The New York Times. "This K.G.B. defector that was described in U.S. News & World Report is not so," Mr. Speakes said.

On Sunday, The Associated Press quoted the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, Lee H. Hamilton, Democrat of Indiana, as saying that he had received a "preliminary report" on the alleged Soviet defector.

Lawmaker Seeks Information

According to the news agency, he declined further comment until he received a more thorough briefing and said he was "not yet sure about the information." The Congressman's office said he was not available for an interview today.

The Administration has been criticized for leaks about Vitaly S. Yurchenko, the turnabout Soviet defector who fled to the West last summer and returned to Moscow in November.